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MEXICO.

The castor-oil plant as a protection against mosquitoes.

Consul Thompson reports from Progreso to the Department of State September 17, 1903, as follows:

In a recent edition of the New York Herald appears an item to the effect that the Department of Agriculture is seeking for a plant "noxious to mosquitoes." If this be a fact any data bearing upon this subject should not be amiss. I would suggest that the Department investigate the properties of the castor-oil plant. The belief is current among the natives of Yucatan that a few castor-oil plants growing in or near a dwelling will protect the inmates from mosquitoes and certain other noxious insects peculiar to Yucatan. This belief has been to a certain extent confirmed by an experiment made by me personally. My dwelling at one time seemed to be peculiarly acceptable to mosquitoes. I planted a row of castor-oil plants around the courtyard and in a short time the mosquito was rare as he was formerly a frequent visitor. My plants were destroyed by the cyclone, and now the mosquitoes are as abundant as formerly.

These facts may be simply coincidences, but at least they are of value as facts to be proven or disproven. The plants are quick-growing and beautiful either as interior decorations or hot-house specimens. If seeds are desired I will furnish them.

Report from Tampico—Inspection of vessels—Yellow fever and smallpox—Increase in number of mosquitoes—Yellow fever at Monterey.

Temporary Acting Assistant Surgeon Lippincott reports, September 28, as follows:

Week ended September 26, 1903—

Bills of health issued	3
Vessels inspected and passed	2
Vessels disinfected and passed	1
Personnel of crew	148
Passengers	6
Baggage ... pieces	11

During the week there were 27 deaths from all causes, of which 4 were from yellow fever, 1 from smallpox, 3 from tuberculosis, and 17 from noncontagious causes. There were 13 new cases of yellow fever officially reported and two left from the previous week, making a total of 15 cases for the week ended September 26, 1903.

On the 22d Doctor Frick removed a sailor from steamship *Dorisbrook*, with temperature 39°; proved malaria, and is still under treatment at the City Hospital.

A sharp increase in the yellow fever prevalence over last week will be noticed. The recent rains have increased the stegomyiæ, which had almost disappeared. During the epidemic the small town of Pueblo Viejo, on the Veracruz side of the Panuco River, and at a distance of about 2½ miles from Tampico, was entirely free from infection until within five days past, due, I believe, to the fact that the strong southeast trade winds prevailing during the summer months had not allowed the stegomyiæ to fly in that direction, and now the September calms